

C-12 detachment enjoys deployment

Tennessee, Wyoming guardsmen team up to take care of business

Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen
386th AEW/PA

Heading back home in September, right along side Airmen of AEF 1/2, will be Soldiers from the U.S. Army Aviation Task Force C-12 Detachment here.

These 13 guardsmen, including eight from Tennessee and five from Wyoming, have become a staple here on base and are nearing the end of their six-month rotation. Their detachment is part of Third Army and the Coalition Forces Land Component Command at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

“The deployment has been very good and we’ve enjoyed our time at the Rock,” said Chief Warrant Officer-5 Ricky Goodrich, who is deployed from the Tennessee National Guard. “We meshed together as a team and it was a very successful six months.”

“It’s been good,” said Chief Warrant Officer-4 Clarence Shockley, who is deployed from the Wyoming National Guard. “We have made new friends from Tennessee and the bond between us is unbreakable.”

The detachment’s job during their tour here has been to transport distinguished visitors across the AOR.

“Basically we’re an air taxi flying VIPs around,” Chief Goodrich said. “We cover the entire AOR and we’ve been everywhere.”

So far they have performed more than 250 missions, including more than 100 over combat zones, logged more than 950 hours and carried more than 1,200 passengers. And all without so much as a hiccup.

“We’re very proud of what we’ve done here,” said Sergeant First Class Aaron Cross, who is deployed from the Tennessee National Guard. “We’ve done a lot of missions, put up a ton of flying hours and we have not dropped one mission or had one accident.”

Nine Army aviators from the detachment rely on three C-12 *Hurons* to execute the mission. The aircraft is basically a transformed civilian King Air 200 with some military modifications.

“The aircraft is very reliable,” said Staff Sgt. Joe Todd, who is deployed from the Tennessee National Guard. “It’s not as fast as some other aircraft, but it is very maneuverable and you can get it into places a lot of other aircraft cannot.”

The det's C-12s have touched down everywhere from Africa to Afghanistan and from Baghdad to Munich and all points in between on their watch. They've flow the secretary of the Navy, the sergeant major of the Army as well as high ranking coalition officials.

"We've worked with South Korea quite a bit as well as the Australians," Chief Goodrich said. "They were both just great."

Typically the unit receives a mission from their battalion and works the entire process from there.

"Getting diplomatic clearances has been a challenge from time-to-time," Sergeant Cross said. "But we've worked with a lot of great NCOs at the defense attaché offices and they've helped us out a lot."

The guardsmen from Tennessee and Wyoming first met up in March prior to their deployment at Fort Bliss, Texas, for a week of refresher training. They will return there in less than a month after their deployment to demobilize, but will look back at their time here with pride.

"I was on the base's first sergeant council and working with other NCOs from around the Air Force was great," Sergeant Cross said. "They were real accommodating to us and anytime we asked for anything they were more than willing to help out."

"Working with the Air Force has been nice," Sergeant Todd said. "They've been very good to us and very hospitable."

"I often hear the Air Force refer to us as their Army C-12 brothers," Chief Shockley said. "And at times it was hard to remember we were Army and (they were) Air Force. We all seemed to work as one team and there was no line of distinction drawn between us. We are all brothers and sisters in arms."

The C-12 detachment will be replaced by guardsmen from Alabama and Alaska.